



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**
KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI
A HO'OMĀKA'IKAI

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LATE

Statement of
JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
Director

Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Thursday, February 06, 2025
1:15 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room #229

In consideration of
BILL NO SB1641
RELATING TO THE STATE OF HAWAII FILM COMMISSION.

Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai and members of the Committee. The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) supports SB1641 which proposes to create a Hawaii Film Commission within DBEDT's Creative Industries Division to 1) create a 5 year strategic plan integrating workforce development business attractions and infrastructure expansions; 2) provide policy recommendations on improving tax incentives and diversifying the State's film and media production industry; 3) establish partnerships with local and global film media industries; 4) serve as the coordinating agency among state, country and private entities to streamline the permitting and production processes; and 5) foster indigenous storytelling initiatives in collaboration with the State's creative communities.

As the film industry evolves in this new era of uncertainty with production contraction across the U.S., a formally codified Hawai'i Film Commission is an important step to advance growth of the industry. With members comprised of representatives from our film offices at the state and county level, combined with active industry leaders

engaged in key areas can anticipate trends, inform, advise and be an organization that works with the State of Hawai'i Film Office (HFO) and Creative Industries Division to forge a strategic vision for our economic development mission.

DBEDT/CID has a Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) between the state and offices of economic development, and their film offices. This may be beneficial and could be utilized in the formation of the commission. In addition, the Hawai'i Film Office has an MOA agreement with those sister state agencies which grant approvals for filming for purposes of statewide statutory permitting functions, which HFO manages.

By setting forth a working collaboration between state and county agencies to address a broader vision for workforce development, infrastructure and facilities, and business attraction, including local creative content development, we can exponentially grow the creative sector pillar as part of the state's economic development, strengthening and cultivating careers in Hawai'i's film industry.

DBEDT/CID will work with the Legislature and our film offices as the measure moves through session to further define the scope of the commission.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Testimony to the Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism

Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 6, 2024, at 1:15PM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

LATE

RE: SB1641 Relating to Economic Development

Aloha e Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber supports Senate Bill 1641 (SB1641), which establishes the State of Hawai'i Film Commission within the Creative Industries Division of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism to support the State's film and media industries and requires reports to the Legislature.

SB1641 aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar for Business Services. This bill promotes policies that drive economic growth, enhance workforce opportunities, and improve the quality of life for Hawaii's residents.

Hawaii's film industry needs centralized leadership to attract business, streamline processes, and expand its workforce. The new State of Hawaii Film Commission, under the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, will develop a five-year plan, improve incentives, form industry partnerships, and simplify permitting. The twelve-member commission, including industry and government representatives, will appoint an executive director and submit annual reports.

A \$750,000 budget for 2025-2027 will support the commission's operations, including hiring an executive director and two staff members. The Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism will oversee the funds, with the bill taking effect on July 1, 2025. The Chamber supports this initiative as it boosts economic growth, creates jobs, and positions Hawaii as a leading hub for film and media production.

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii is the state's leading business advocacy organization, dedicated to improving Hawaii's economy and securing Hawaii's future for growth and opportunity. Our mission is to foster a vibrant economic climate. As such, we support initiatives and policies that align with the 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii that create opportunities to strengthen overall competitiveness, improve the quantity and skills of available workforce, diversify the economy, and build greater local wealth.

We respectfully ask to pass Senate Bill 1641. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



February 6, 2025

Committee on Energy, Economic
Development and Tourism
Sen. DeCoite, Chair
Sen. Wakai, Vice Chair

The Senate
The Thirtieth-Third Legislature
Regular Session of 2025

RE: SB 1641 RELATING TO THE STATE OF HAWAII FILM
COMMISSION

DATE: Thursday, February 6, 2025

TIME: 1:15 pm

PLACE: Conference Room 229

VIA Videoconference

State Capitol 415 South Beretania Street, Honolulu HI

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and the Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of SB 1641 - RELATING TO THE STATE OF HAWAII FILM COMMISSION.

SAG-AFTRA represents over 1400 actors, recording artists, and media professionals in our state. We are the professional performers working in front of the camera and behind the microphone. The SAG-AFTRA Hawai'i Local has a long-standing history of protecting performers in all areas of the entertainment, advertising, and media industries.

As the latest DBEDT figures indicate, in 2024 our film and television industry generated \$324,150,100 in sales or economic activity, \$20,235,960 in estimated tax revenues, and \$74,948,000 in Hawaii household income generated because of the qualified productions.¹ The film/tv/streaming industry also accounted for 2,247 jobs for 2023².

¹ <https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/annuals/2024/2024-cid-act217.pdf>

² https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/economic/data_reports/hawaii-creative-report/HI_Creative_Ind_2024.pdf

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SCREEN ACTORS GUILD - AMERICAN FEDERATION
OF
TELEVISION AND RADIO ARTISTS
SAGAFTRA.org
Associated Actors & Artistes of America / AFL-CIO

Our industry is too economically important, logistically complex, and globally far reaching to not have a film commission. This is an idea that is long overdue. Creating a film commission will go a long way to ensuring transparency, fair play, and effectiveness.

We are grateful for the legislature's continued support of our industry. Passage of this measure will help to solidify Hawaii's place in a global film industry.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to our offices for more information on how this measure impacts our members, your constituents.

Respectfully,

Mericia Palma Elmore

Mericia Palma Elmore, Executive Director SAG-AFTRA Hawaii Local

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SCREEN ACTORS GUILD - AMERICAN FEDERATION
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IATSE LOCAL 665

FILM, TELEVISION, STAGE, PROJECTION AND TRADESHOWS
Since 1937

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF THEATRICAL STAGE EMPLOYEES, MOVING PICTURE TECHNICIANS, ARTISTS AND ALLIED CRAFTS
OF THE UNITED STATES, ITS TERRITORIES AND CANADA, AFL-CIO, CLC



Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawai'i
Regular Session of 2025
Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism
Testimony by IATSE 665
February 6th, 2025

SB1641 - RELATING TO THE STATE OF HAWAII FILM COMMISSION

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the Senate committee,

My name is Tuia'ana Scanlan, IATSE International Trustee and President of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. **IATSE 665 strongly supports SB1641**, relating to the state of Hawai'i film commission.

As the latest DBEDT figures indicate, in 2024 our film and television industry generated \$324,150,100 in sales or economic activity, \$20,235,960 in estimated tax revenues, and \$74,948,000 in Hawai'i household income generated because of the qualified productions. The film/tv/streaming industry also accounted for 2,247 jobs for 2023.

The logistical complexity and the unique ability of this sector to place images of Hawai'i at the forefront of the world's attention necessitates the creation of a film commission. The creation of a film commission is imperative to affirm public faith in the transparent use of public funds in a fair and equitable manner. When subject matter experts in the film and tv industry are assembled and are committed to reaching consensus in the administrative needs of this sector, it maximizes the effectiveness of the incentive and the value to our community.

IATSE 665 strongly supports SB1641. We urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

In Solidarity,

Tuia'ana Scanlan
International Trustee
President, IATSE 665
(he/him/his)



MAUI
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
VOICE OF BUSINESS

LATE

HEARING BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM 229
Thursday, February 6, 2025, 1:15 PM

To The Honorable Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair
The Honorable Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Economic Development and Tourism

SUPPORT SB1641 RELATING TO THE STATE OF HAWAII FILM COMMISSION

The Maui Chamber of Commerce **SUPPORTS SB1641** which establishes the State of Hawaii Film Commission within the Creative Industries Division of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism to support the State's film and media industries.

The Chamber has historically been a strong supporter of the film industry. We fully support and appreciate the creation of the commission and its proposed duties, particularly its inclusion of neighbor island film directors. Given the leadership within the Creative Industries Division and the Film Office, we believe they could be utilized effectively to work with the commission, rather than adding a new executive director. We understand and support the allocation of funding for additional staff to facilitate this initiative. This is a valuable asset to our economic diversification plan.

For these reasons we **SUPPORT SB1641** and respectfully request its passage.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.

SB-1641

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 6:16:28 PM

Testimony for EDT on 2/6/2025 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shereen Balles	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha mai Kākou,

Aloha Chair Decoite, Vice Chair Wakai and the Senate Committee members,

I am in STRONG SUPPORT of SENATE BILL1641.

Mahālo nūnui for introducing SB 1641 to be heard. I was unaware that the State Film Commission actually does not exist. Believe me when I say, What!?!?!?!? I was dumbfounded when I heard about this.

Therefore it is my humble request that you pass this bill, as we need a film commission to help the film industry here in Hawai'i continue to grow and thrive. It makes sense as to why there are so many questions as to why things are the way they are currently. I say this, as fact. We need people to gather in order to make decisions, moving forward.

Our film industry could use a film commission to come together and make the right choices to continue having films and TV shows filmed here.

Mahalo for giving me the opportunity to testify here in written form as well as in person at the hearing. Thank you kindly for continuing to support the film industry thusfar.

Me ke Aloha Pumehana Pau'ole,

Shereen Balles

Kanaka Mā'oli Indigenous Writer, Producer, Director, Actress, Singer and Performer

Sagaftra Member, HARA Member ICAN student

SB-1641

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 8:41:48 PM

Testimony for EDT on 2/6/2025 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alison Week	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a local filmmaker/producer, I am writing in support of this bill.

SB-1641

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 8:31:37 AM

Testimony for EDT on 2/6/2025 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Krista Carella	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB1641.

SB-1641

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 4:13:37 PM

Testimony for EDT on 2/6/2025 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sally “Kalei” Davis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

I am Sally "Kalei " Davis.

I am a SAG/AFTRA member, and have worked in the film industry here in Hawai‘i since the 1980's as an actor, stunt performer, stand in, as well as casting many film and tv shows. Hawai‘i needs a Film Commission to help with production funding, location and tax assistance. It will be a one stop go to for productions to get all the permits and help they need to film in beautiful Hawai‘i Nei.

SB-1641

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 7:27:02 PM

Testimony for EDT on 2/6/2025 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Randall Yokota	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Our industry is too economically important, logistically complex, and globally far-reaching, not having a film commission. This is an idea that is long overdue. Creating a film commission will go a long way to ensuring transparency, fair play, and effectiveness. We are grateful for the legislature's continued support of our industry. Passage of this measure will help to solidify Hawaii's place in a global film industry. Mahalo for your time to read this testimony.

SB-1641

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 9:31:41 PM

Testimony for EDT on 2/6/2025 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gerard Elmore	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I'm writing to express my strong support for this bill.

Having worked on film productions in various states, I've experienced firsthand the valuable role a film commission plays. In each of those states, the commission was proactive, attentive to our needs, and always ready to offer support. Their approach was collaborative and genuinely helpful, and led to smooth productions.

As we continue to compete with other states for film productions, it's essential that we have the right support in place. Our industry is more competitive than ever before and establishing a film commission here will give us the resources we need to promote our state and stay competitive.

Mahalo for your support,

Gerard Elmore

VP of Film NMG Network

Executive Director 'Ohina

SB-1641

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 9:10:11 AM

Testimony for EDT on 2/6/2025 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deborah Glazier	Testifying for SAG-AFTRA	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you Senators Lynn DeCoite and Glenn Wakai for supporting SAG-AFTRA members in Hawaii.

As a filmmaker and SAG-AFTRA member, I fully support SB 1641.

Hawaii has hosted thousands of productions since 1898. **What are we waiting for?**

Passage of this measure will help to solidify Hawaii in the global film industry.

Many states have recognized the local and global impact they can have on their communities. CA, AL, AK, CO, CT, FL, MA, SC, NY have state film commissions and smaller cities have regional film commissions because they know their communities will benefit by putting themselves on the map as a viable film location.

A **successful film commission** offers **valuable resources**, can help to promote Hawaii as a film destination which helps to grow local economies, and ensure that future productions are met with transparent, **effective guidance** for all who wish to enjoy working in our State.

“Build it, they will come.” “Field of Dreams. ” Let’s be prepared to go the distance! **Please pass SB 1641.**

Mahalo nui loa.

SB-1641

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 12:59:27 PM

Testimony for EDT on 2/6/2025 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pete Mark	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm in total support of SB 1641. I work as a background actor and have witnessed the numerous benefits of this industry. It is one of the cleanest industries Hawaii could have. All the productions I've worked on were enviromentally sound and culturally aware. Many,many local jobs from the production crews, heavy equipment workers, fuel suppliers, caterers, costumers, hair and makeup , background artists and stunt crew.

Please back SB1641